

Indiana Commission To Begin EPO Testing

At a public meeting on April 21, 2004 the Indiana Horse Racing Commission voted to promulgate rules regarding the testing of horses for the antibody to Erythropoietin (EPO).

The drug is proven effective in the treatment of human anemia and related conditions but is a prohibited drug in the horse racing industry. The drug is considered a performance enhancer when administered to racehorses. EPO stimulates the production of red blood cells and increases a horse's oxygen carrying capacity. EPO can also have serious and life-threatening side effects.

"We believe our testing for the EPO antibody will be an effective deterrent in curbing its abuse," commented Indiana Horse Racing Commission Executive Director, Joe Gorajec.

Indiana is the first state in the Midwest to routinely test for the EPO antibody. Testing for the antibody was first initiated on November 1, 2003 by the New York Racing and Wagering Board and the Ontario Racing Commission. As in those two jurisdictions, horses whose blood indicates the presence of the human recombinant EPO antibody will be prohibited from competing until further testing indicates the horse is free of the antibody.

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